

present in the form of a plastic film with constant thickness, maintained by film supports which undergo deformation through the addition of heat and applied pressure, until a model is created based on casting taken directly from the patient.

Michel AMORIC's publication: "Gouttières orthodontiques et orthopédiques thermoformées" *Thermoformed orthodontic and orthopedic splints*, 1993, Editions SID can also be mentioned. The principle behind this technique is that one uses a flat plate as a base material with a constant thickness. Starting with a traditionally produced mold the plate is deformed so as to obtain an apparatus having an appropriate shape.

Not all apparatuses can be obtained by this method. In particular, this method is not efficient for apparatuses having a hollow body and variable thickness. The stretching that the plate must withstand in these specific cases is considerable and therefore difficult to obtain without tearing. Most of all, thicknesses cannot be controlled since they are simply dependent on the stretching necessary to obtain the desired shape and are therefore irregular since not all areas are stretched in the same manner. This technique is therefore not appropriate for a certain number of cases.

The variant consisting in the use of a two part apparatus, that is, two base plates yielding two half-apparatuses that are assembled is also not adequate. It allows a decrease in the stretching undergone by the plates, and therefore in the risks of ripping and the problems of too irregular thicknesses, but the problem is in part displaced to the assembly of the two half-apparatuses obtained. In effect, the difficulty lies in the precision and solidity of the glued or soldered assembly, inasmuch as one must also install in this assembly area the fastening hooks for the fastening of the apparatus in the patient's mouth --